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NASA Procedural Requirements

NPR 1450.4G

Effective Date: October 31, 2001

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COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY

Handling Congressional Correspondence And Information Concerning Congressional Activities

Responsible Office: Office of Legislative Affairs

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Effective Date: October 31, 2001

Preface

P.1 Purpose

This NPR addresses NASA's responsibilities and procedures for handling correspondence and requests for information received from the U.S. Congress and for handling requests for legislative material. It does not abridge the rights of NASA employees to communicate with Congress as private citizens on their own time and without using Government resources. To ensure consistency and quality, official NASA correspondence to Members of Congress will be signed by the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, or the Associate Administrator for Legislative Affairs. The Office of Inspector General prepares and signs out its own correspondence to the Congress and is exempt from the signature policy noted here. When the Office of Legislative Affairs determines it is appropriate, Center Directors and other Officials-In-Charge may be authorized to sign correspondence to Congress.

P.2 Applicability

This NPR applies to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers.

P.3 Authority

The National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended, 42 U.S.C. section 2451, et. seq.

P.4 References

P.5 Cancellation

NPR 1450.4F, dated September 1, 1996.

**/s/ Mary D. Kerwin for
Jeff Lawrence
Associate Administrator for
Legislative Affairs**

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CHAPTER 1. Responsibilities

1.1. The Office of Legislative Affairs is responsible for the following:

1.1.1. Monitoring legislative activity, maintaining liaison with Members of Congress and its staff, and acquiring and disseminating all legislative material for NASA.

1.1.2. Controlling, tracking, and responding to all correspondence addressed from Congress to NASA. When the Administrator's signature is required, the Office of Legislative Affairs will forward the original correspondence to the Headquarters Correspondence Management Office (HCMO) for control. The Office of Legislative Affairs will provide to the HCMO a response to the incoming correspondence from Congress. The HCMO will obtain final clearance and signature of the Administrator and provide the signed correspondence to the Office of Legislative Affairs for distribution.

1.2. Officials-in-Charge and Center Directors are responsible for the following when the Office of Legislative Affairs directs correspondence from Congress to Headquarters offices and NASA Centers:

1.2.1. Prepare and forward to the Office of Legislative Affairs a proposed draft reply to the incoming correspondence, within a reasonable, specified timeframe, addressing all of the pertinent issues raised in the incoming correspondence.

1.2.2. Negotiate a revised due date with the Office of Legislative Affairs when the original due date cannot be met.

1.3. NASA employees and NASA organizations contacted directly by Congress are responsible for notifying and briefing the Office of Legislative Affairs on the specifics of the inquiry.

1.4. NASA requests for legislative material, such as bills, reports, and hearing records, shall be made to the Office of Legislative Affairs.

CHAPTER 2. Detailed Procedures and Guidelines

2.1. The Headquarters Mail Room will deliver, unopened, all correspondence from Congress addressed to NASA officials by name or title, to the Office of Legislative Affairs. Correspondence that is clearly marked to be opened only by specific NASA officials, or is addressed to the Office of the Inspector General or to a labor union official so identified by title, shall be delivered unopened to the addressee.

2.2. Incoming correspondence from Congress, which should have been delivered initially to the Office of Legislative Affairs, but instead was delivered directly to a Headquarters office (including by fax or other electronic means), shall be sent immediately to the Congressional Inquiries Division for control and action.

2.3. For correspondence from Congress sent to the NASA Centers or to major project offices at the Centers, the following procedures will be followed:

2.3.1. For routine correspondence and communication from Congress (e.g., employment inquiries, tour requests, general information), NASA Centers shall forward a copy of the incoming correspondence, immediately upon its receipt, to the Inquiries Division, Office of Legislative Affairs, and shall follow with a copy of the final signed response.

2.3.2. Any uncertainty on the part of a NASA Center about whether incoming correspondence from Congress is routine and may be signed by the Center Director rather than by a NASA Headquarters Official should be discussed immediately with the Inquiries Division.

2.3.3. For all other incoming correspondence and communication from Congress, immediately provide a copy to the Inquiries Division. The Inquiries Division will then, in consultation with the NASA Center receiving the inquiry, determine the appropriate steps and office for action and signature. When it has been determined that a NASA Center may sign the response, the NASA Center will provide to the Inquiries Division, as soon as possible, a draft proposed response for approval prior to mailing the signed response to the Congress. A copy of the final signed response shall be sent concurrently to the Office of Legislative Affairs.

CHAPTER 3. Measurements

3.1. The Office of Legislative Affairs will track the following:

3.1.1. The number and date of incoming cases of correspondence from Congress.

3.1.2. The number and date of closed cases of correspondence from Congress.